

# **2002 Results of the ACT Assessment**

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Colleges and universities use tests such as the ACT or the SAT, along with other information, to make admissions decisions. This report reviews the results of the ACT Assessment for South Carolina and for the nation for 2002.

The ACT includes four tests: English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. Each requires between 35 and 60 minutes for a total testing time of 2 hours, 55 minutes. Results are reported for all four tests and for a composite score. The score scale for each ACT subject area, as well as the composite score, is from 1 to 36.

The average composite score of the 1,116,082 students in the nation who graduated in 2002 and had taken the ACT during their sophomore, junior, or senior years was 20.8. In South Carolina, the average composite score of the 11,978 students who graduated in 2002 and had taken the ACT during their sophomore, junior, or senior years was 19.2. In South Carolina 1,181 more scores were reported for ACT test-takers than in the previous year (11,978 in 2002 and 10,797 in 2001).

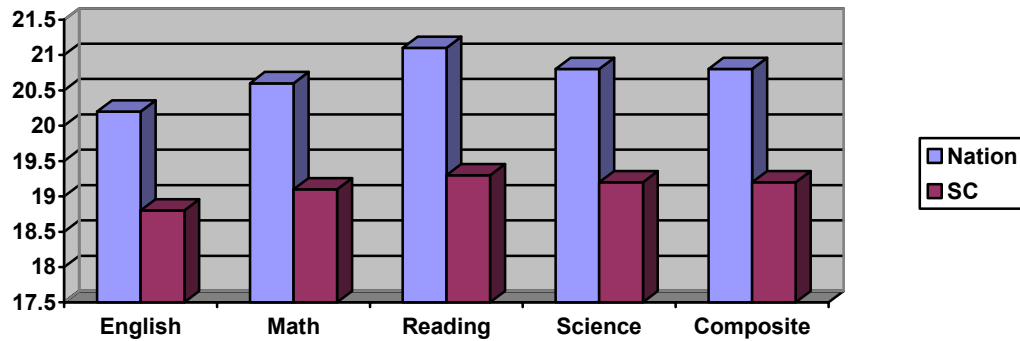
Scores in South Carolina remain below the scores that, according to ACT, Inc.'s "National Summary Report" for 2002, indicate adequate preparation for college-level work. According to that report, the typical cut-off scores indicating that a student has at least a fifty-percent chance of receiving a "B" in entry-level college courses are 21 for entry-level literature, 23 for entry-level biology, 25 for entry-level chemistry, and 23 for entry-level algebra, while the average 2002 ACT scores in South Carolina on English, science reasoning, and math were 18.8, 19.2, and 19.1. Students who earn ACT scores below the cut-off scores listed above "may need additional academic preparation to be successful in these typical college entry-level courses," according to ACT's national report.

The table below gives average scores for South Carolina (SC) and the nation by subject area and by composite. South Carolina's average composite score for 2002 dropped to 19.2 from the previous year's 19.3.

**ACT Average Scores for Subject Area and Composite  
South Carolina and the Nation  
2002**

Reference Group	Number of Students	English	Math	Reading	Science Reasoning	Composite
SC	11,978	18.8	19.1	19.3	19.2	19.2
Nation	1,116,082	20.2	20.6	21.1	20.8	20.8

The graph below presents a 2002 ACT score comparison for the nation and for South Carolina by subject area and composite score:



Five-year trend data, beginning with 1997–98, for South Carolina and the nation are presented below:

**ACT Average Scores for Subject Area and Composite  
South Carolina and the Nation  
1997–98 to 2001–02**

**SOUTH CAROLINA:**

Year	Number	English	Math	Reading	Science	Composite
1997–98	5,385	18.4	18.8	19.4	19.0	19.0
1998–99	6,766	18.6	19.0	19.3	19.2	19.1
1999–00	9,051	18.7	19.2	19.5	19.2	19.3
2000–01	10,797	18.8	19.3	19.5	19.2	19.3
2001–02	11,978	18.8	19.1	19.3	19.2	19.2

**NATION:**

Year	Number	English	Math	Reading	Science	Composite
1997–98	995,039	20.4	20.8	21.4	21.1	21.0
1998–99	1,019,053	20.5	20.7	21.4	21.0	21.0
1999–00	1,065,138	20.5	20.7	21.4	21.0	21.0
2000–01	1,069,772	20.5	20.7	21.3	21.0	21.0
2001–02	1,116,082	20.2	20.6	21.1	20.8	20.8

The table below presents 2002 ACT data by gender. In South Carolina, for composite scores, females scored higher than males, while the reverse was true for the nation. In both South Carolina and the nation, female students scored higher on English and reading, and male students scored higher on math and science reasoning.

**ACT Average Scores for Subject Area and Composite by Gender  
South Carolina and the Nation  
2002**

**SOUTH CAROLINA:**

Gender	Number	English	Math	Reading	Science	Composite
Males	*4,447	18.0	19.5	18.7	19.4	19.0
Females	*7,426	19.2	18.9	19.6	19.0	19.3

\*These totals will not add up to the number of students who took the ACT in South Carolina because not all of those students reported a gender.

**NATION:**

Gender	Number	English	Math	Reading	Science	Composite
Males	485,797	19.7	21.2	20.9	21.3	20.9
Females	623,128	20.6	20.1	21.3	20.4	20.7

The table below presents 2002 ACT data by ethnicity/race. For all tests and the composite, the average scores for white students were higher than those for African-American students.

**ACT Average Scores for Subject Area and Composite by Ethnicity/Race  
South Carolina and the Nation  
2002**

**SOUTH CAROLINA:**

Ethnicity	Number	English	Math	Reading	Science	Composite
African American	*4,141	15.3	16.5	15.9	16.6	16.2
White	*6,800	20.8	20.6	21.3	20.7	21.0

\*These totals will not add up to the number of students who took the ACT in South Carolina because not all of those students reported a race/ethnicity.

**NATION:**

Ethnicity	Number	English	Math	Reading	Science	Composite
African American	120,311	16.2	16.7	16.8	17.1	16.8
White	773,933	21.2	21.3	22.1	21.6	21.7

The tables below present the relationship between average ACT scores and annual family income levels for the total group of students taking the ACT, the group who reported completing or planning to complete a core program of college preparatory high school courses, and those who did not complete or plan to complete such a core program. A detailed definition of a core program is on the next page.

**ACT Average Composite Scores by Annual Family Income for  
Total Group and for Core/Less Than Core Program Completers  
South Carolina and the Nation  
2002**

**SOUTH CAROLINA:**

	<\$18,000		\$18,000–\$50,000		\$50,000 or More	
Group	Number	Score	Number	Score	Number	Score
Total	1,248	16.4	4,262	18.3	3,792	21.0
Core	871	16.9	3,141	18.8	3,029	21.3
Less than Core	364	15.1	1,049	16.7	669	19.8

**NATION:**

	<\$18,000		\$18,000–\$50,000		\$50,000 or More	
Group	Number	Score	Number	Score	Number	Score
Total	82,556	17.8	369,313	19.9	437,417	22.2
Core	43,193	18.7	214,595	20.9	289,714	23.0
Less than Core	37,549	16.8	147,804	18.5	138,347	20.6

ACT reports average scores for students taking the "core or more" and taking "less than core." ACT defines this coursework in its publication, *"ACT Assessment 2002 Results, Summary Report, South Carolina,"* as follows:

**Core or More**

A core or more program is defined as a typical college preparatory program including the following:

•**English:** four years or more with one year of credit each for English 9, English 10, English 11, English 12;

•**Mathematics:** three years or more with one year of credit each for Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry and one-half year of credit each for Trigonometry,

Calculus (not Pre-Calculus), other math courses beyond Algebra II, and Computer Math/Computer Science;

•**Social Studies:** three years or more with one year of credit each for American History, World History, and American Government and one-half year of credit each for Economics, Geography, Psychology, and other history (European, state, etc.); and

•**Natural Sciences:** three years or more with one year of credit each for General/Physical/Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.

### Less than Core

A less-than-core program refers to any high school program consisting of fewer courses than those included in "core or more."

The average ACT scores in English, mathematics, reading, science reasoning, and the composite for 2002 students who completed or planned to complete a core curriculum and for those who did not are shown for South Carolina (SC) and the nation and for South Carolina by ethnicity in the following two tables. Students who completed or planned to complete core coursework had higher average scores than students who did not, and white students had higher average scores than African-American students. White students who did not complete or plan to complete core coursework had higher average scores than African-American students who did complete or plan to complete core coursework. (Scores are not reported for "Other" ethnic groups because ACT, Inc. does not report scores for groups in which there are fewer than 500 test-takers.) "E" is English, "M" is Mathematics, "R" is Reading, "SR" is Science Reasoning, and "C" is Composite.

### ACT Average Scores for Subject Area and Composite, Core/Less than Core South Carolina and the Nation 2002

GROUP	Core or More					Less than Core				
	E	M	R	SR	C	E	M	R	SR	C
SC	19.4	19.5	19.8	19.6	19.7	16.7	17.6	17.6	17.7	17.5
Nation	21.4	21.6	22.2	21.7	21.8	18.4	18.8	19.5	19.4	19.2

**ACT Average Scores for Subject Area and Composite  
Core/Less than Core by Ethnicity  
South Carolina  
2002**

SC	Core or More					Less than Core				
	E	M	R	SR	C	E	M	R	SR	C
African American	16.0	16.9	16.4	17.0	16.7	13.9	15.6	14.7	15.5	15.1
White	21.2	20.9	21.6	21.0	21.3	19.3	19.3	20.1	19.6	19.7

The table below provides the average composite score for each South Carolina school district and the number of ACT test-takers in each district.

**ACT Average Composite Scores and Number of Students Tested  
by School District  
South Carolina  
2002**

<b>District</b>	<b>Number Tested</b>	<b>Average Composite Score</b>
Abbeville	65	17.5
Aiken	242	19.9
Allendale	26	17.1
Anderson 1	114	21.3
Anderson 2	64	20.0
Anderson 3	17	17.6
Anderson 4	23	18.1
Anderson 5	148	20.9
Bamberg 1	53	17.2
Bamberg 2	16	15.3
Barnwell 19	14	15.6
Barnwell 29	35	18.5
Barnwell 45	75	19.4
Beaufort	179	19.3
Berkeley	375	18.7
Calhoun	35	16.2
Charleston	415	18.8
Cherokee	141	19.3
Chester	86	16.8
Chesterfield	109	18.0
Clarendon 1	13	15.7
Clarendon 2	58	16.1
Clarendon 3	7	20.0

<b>District</b>	<b>Number Tested</b>	<b>Average Composite Score</b>
Colleton	74	16.8
Darlington	156	18.1
Dillon 1	6	18.0
Dillon 2	20	19.8
Dillon 3	24	18.1
Dorchester 2	353	20.2
Dorchester 4	43	15.2
Edgefield	68	19.5
Fairfield	50	16.5
Florence 1	156	19.7
Florence 2	20	17.1
Florence 3	77	16.4
Florence 4	19	14.8
Florence 5	20	17.0
Georgetown	211	18.5
Greenville	695	20.1
Greenwood 50	137	18.2
Greenwood 51	23	18.7
Greenwood 52	33	18.6
Hampton 1	54	17.1
Hampton 2	26	16.9
Horry	451	18.9
Jasper	17	16.2
Kershaw	239	18.9
Lancaster	91	18.0
Laurens 55	87	19.2
Laurens 56	46	18.7
Lee	29	14.3
Lexington 1	294	20.9
Lexington 2	123	18.9
Lexington 3	24	19.5
Lexington 4	21	19.6
Lexington 5	468	21.4
McCormick	16	18.6
Marion 1	42	17.4
Marion 2	32	16.0
Marion 7	17	16.2
Marlboro	78	16.6
Newberry	66	18.7
Oconee	168	20.4
Orangeburg 3	64	15.6
Orangeburg 4	47	18.6
Orangeburg 5	153	16.6
Pickens	214	21.7



<b>District</b>	<b>Number Tested</b>	<b>Average Composite Score</b>
Richland 1	514	17.2
Richland 2	289	20.4
Saluda	36	17.6
Spartanburg 1	89	19.1
Spartanburg 2	141	19.7
Spartanburg 3	37	18.0
Spartanburg 4	32	20.1
Spartanburg 5	90	19.7
Spartanburg 6	208	20.5
Spartanburg 7	73	20.3
Sumter 2	162	18.1
Sumter 17	166	18.9
Union	72	18.8
Williamsburg	107	16.1
York 1	68	19.9
York 2	30	20.9
York 3	252	19.6
York 4	22	22.6

[Click here for results for each state.](#)

(For questions about this report, please contact Bunny Mack, Office of Research, State Department of Education, 803-734-8573, or at [bmack@sde.state.sc.us](mailto:bmack@sde.state.sc.us).)